

Michigan's  
West Coast  
**WIRED**  
*...for innovation*



## A West Michigan Workforce Innovations Lab

# WIRED West Michigan: Who We Are

- **Grantee**
  - West Michigan Strategic Alliance
- **Fiscal Agent**
  - Grand Valley State University
- **Region**
  - Allegan County
  - Barry County
  - Ionia County
  - Kent County
  - Muskegon County
  - Newaygo County
  - Ottawa County



## THE WIRED WEST MICHIGAN STORY

**WIRED West Michigan supports the people, ideas and training necessary to attract and retain innovative employers and skilled jobs across our region.**

- **Our economy has undergone many changes, yet the key strengths of its workforce, a diversity of culture, talent and spirit, remain.**
- **WIRED West Michigan is focused on aggressively equipping the region's industries with the jobs and talent and vision necessary to compete in a changing economy.**
- **WIRED West Michigan was designed to help communities transform themselves at every level – from the boardrooms to the classrooms – and create new thinking about how we live, learn, work and play.**

# WIRED West Michigan: Motion and Progress

## Innovation Categories

### Market Intelligence

Better understand the structure of regional employment clusters and the emerging skill requirements for the innovation economy.

- Emerging Sector Skill Analysis
- Global Supply Chain Analysis
- Knowledge Workers & Economic Development

### InnovationWORKS

Catalyze, support and sustain strategies to support innovation in our regional economy.

- Innovation WORKS Commercialization Infrastructure
- Innovation Curriculum
- Innovation WORKS Design Council

### Workforce System Transformations

Restructure key elements of our workforce development and education systems for emerging, existing and transitional workers.

- Global School & Accelerated Engineering
- Health Care RSA
- Manufacturing Skill Development Coop
- NCRC/WorkKeys & Work Based Learning
- Regional Tri-Sector Workforce Development Initiative (TEAM)

### Enterprise Development

Stimulate entrepreneurship and new business creation in key sectors of the innovation economy.

- Entrepreneurial League System®

Planning complete, policy council review pending

Innovation complete, report submitted

Phase II implementation

# WIRED West Michigan: Defining the Region

## Data-Driven Regional Vision

- Commissioned November 2006 Analysis by W.E. Upjohn Institute:  
*Does Our WIRED Region Reflect True Economic Boundaries?*
- How interconnected was our seven-county area?
  - ✓ Economic clusters
  - ✓ Transportation networks
  - ✓ Political relationships
  - ✓ Workforce
- For a regional approach to succeed, we needed evidence to show working together would bring wide-spread benefits
- Demonstrate that a majority of regional residents would broadly share in any improvements to the local economy

# WIRED West Michigan: Defining the Region

W.E. UPJOHN INSTITUTE  
*for Employment Research*

## Study Reviewed:

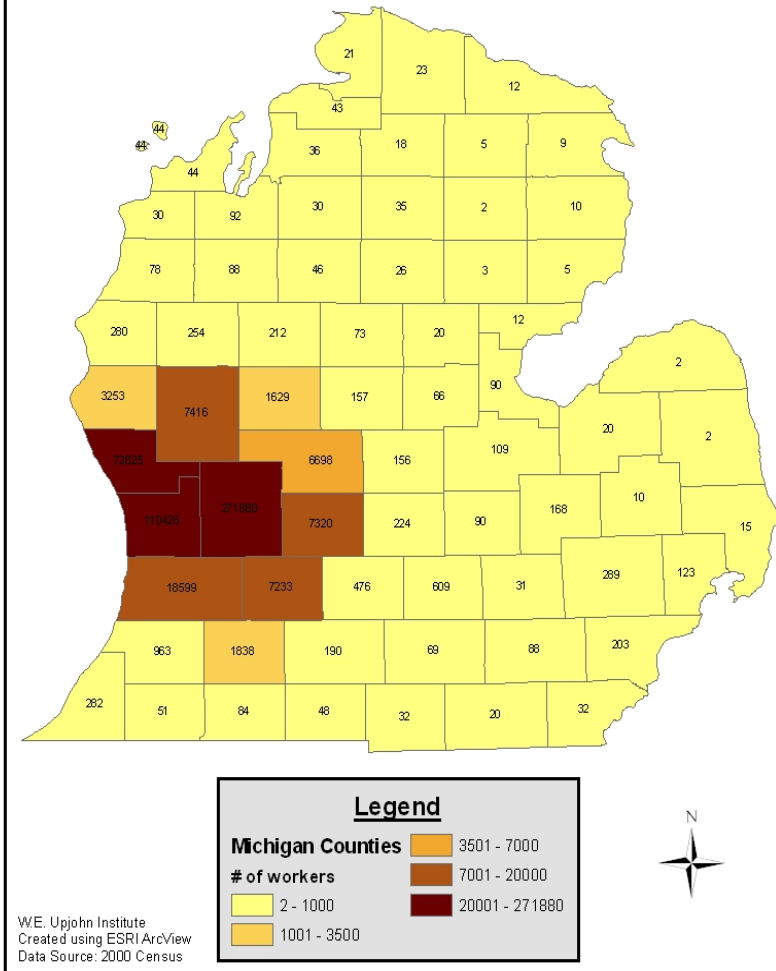
- **Commuting data**
- **Migration patterns**
- **Employment trends**
- **Intra-region employment spillover**
- **Inter-county economic impact data**

# WIRED West Michigan: Defined by the Data

## Results

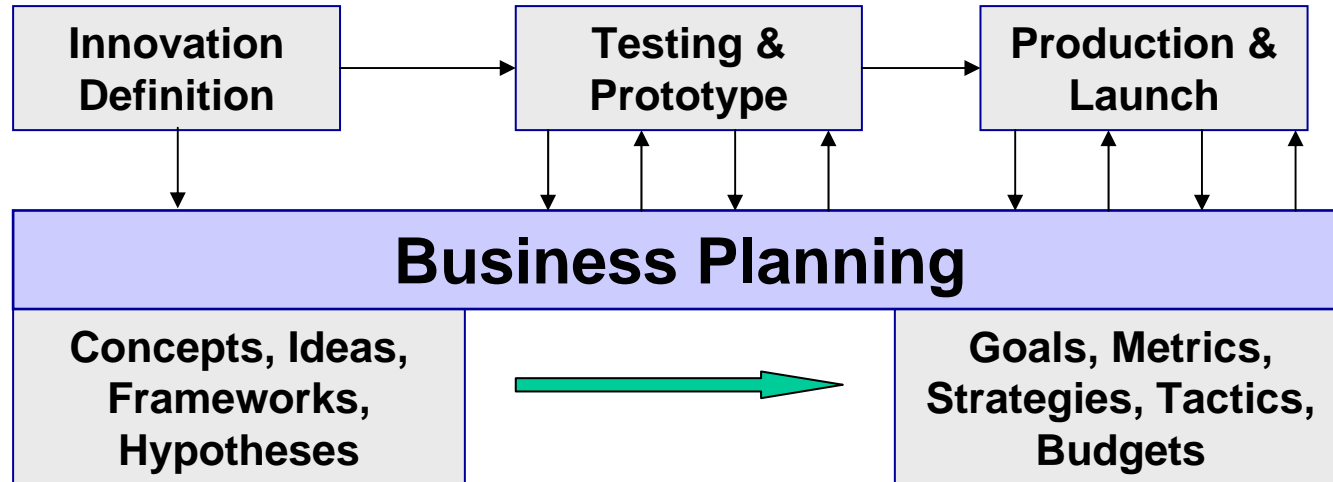
- Significant cross-country commuting within 7-county region
- Major drop-off in adjacent counties' workforce commuting patterns
- Significant migration patterns within 7-county region
- Major drop-off in job spillover benefits outside 7-county region
- Informed our approach, our tactics and our messages

Where does the workforce for Kent, Ottawa, and Muskegon Counties live?

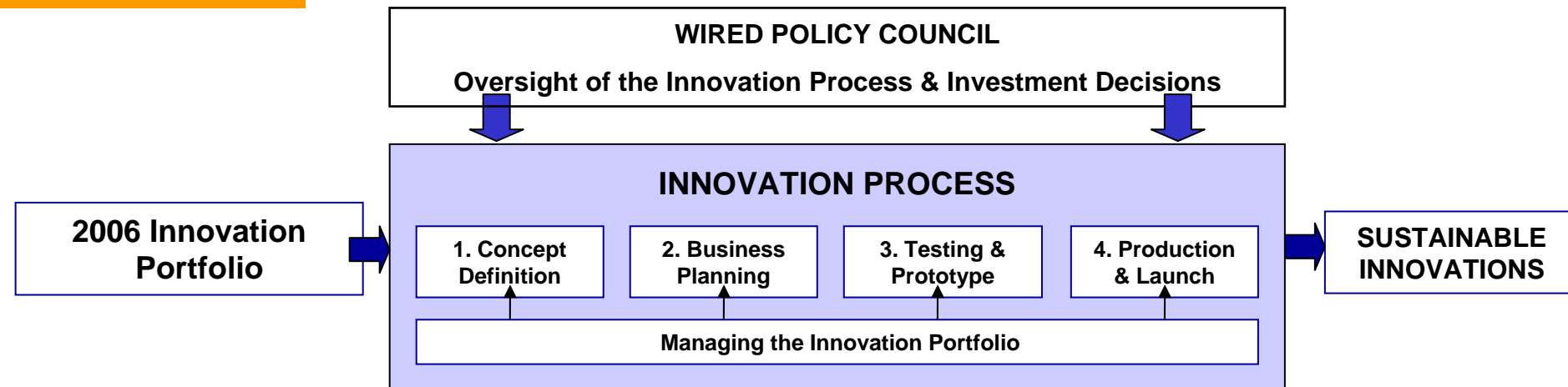


# WIRED Update: Motion and Progress

## Micro-Level



## Macro-Level





# **WIRED West Michigan: Workforce Innovation Technology System (WITS) Regional Seatholders**

**West Michigan Regional Planning Commission**

**Ottawa County Michigan WORKS**

**W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment**

**Grand Valley State University - Community Research Institute**

**Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce**

**The Right Place, Inc.**

**Grand Rapids Community College**

**Heart of West Michigan United Way**

**Macatawa Area Coordinating Council**

**WIRED West Michigan (Maura Warren - Regional Coordinator)**

## Seatholder Feedback:

- *Good data tool for regional planning purposes.*
- *Agencies/partners appreciate the GIS mapping functions.*
- *Useful to the regional WIB's in layering demographic data.*
- *Data Sources are reliable with current information.*
- *Webinars are informative learning opportunities.*
- *Customized reporting provides personalization.*
- *Version Two is a much more “user-friendly”.*
- *Decision Data Customer service is easily & readily available.*

## Lessons Learned

- *Opportunity to link **education, workforce and economic development**.*
  - Reframe how we apply data, with a different “customer” now in mind
  - Shift to view **employer as customer**, potentially touching many lives, vs. one worker at a time
  - Employers just starting to understand the data that’s available and why it’s relevant
  - Can’t and won’t happen overnight

## Lessons Learned

- *You can lead a horse to data, but you can't make him access it!*
  - Sophisticated tools don't help those who aren't trained to analyze the data
  - Repeated mandated training on **use and relevance** of data is vital
  - Innovative, entrepreneurial minds will always find somewhere else to be

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